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JUN 1 1951


MEMORANDUM FOR: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR NATIONAL ESTIMATES

SUBJECT : Estimate of the Far East Situation.

1. At our request the Office of National Estimates furnished us an oral, informal estimate of the situation in the Far East on 13 April 1951. This report was for our planning purposes and was sent to some of our field stations where it was greatly appreciated. A paraphrase of our outgoing message is attached (Att. I).

2. The response to our message from one of our Far East Field Stations is also attached (Att. II). It is thought these comments from persons dealing with the situation at close range on a day to day basis may be of some interest to you.

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Assistant Director  
Special Operations

Encl: 2

1. Paraphrase of outgoing message
2. Paraphrase of message from Far East Field Station

cc: Deputy Director (Plans)

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ATTACHMENT I

ESTIMATE OF SITUATION SENT TO CERTAIN FAR EAST OSO STATIONS

The best available Washington estimates of the enemy situation for the next two months are as follows:

1. Heavy Communist ground offensive with increased firepower and possibly other tactical improvements is probable in Korea by early May.
2. Considerably augmented enemy airforce activity in support of this offensive is likely, although possibly owing to continued bombing of North Korean airfields, the enemy may be unable to reach the battlefield with an effective number of planes owing to the short flight radius of his planes.
3. We have the capacity to contain the Chinese ground offensive and to destroy the Chinese Air Force.
4. The submarine military threat is not considered serious by the Navy, although political effects of the enemy's use of submarines might be serious since we would assume any submarine was Soviet.
5. Although the decision would be determined by the battle situation, it is possible if the enemy air force attacks UN troops in strength we would retaliate by air strikes in Manchuria, with incalculable effects as regards the possible Soviet intervention on behalf of the Chinese Communists.
6. The "International Volunteer Force" is not expected to be large regular Soviet organizations posing under that name in the fashion that the Chinese Communists pretended their forces were volunteers. It is estimated that Japanese, Mongols, Russians and possibly others would be in such a force, but at this stage more to augment technical deficiencies of the Chinese Communists, such as in artillery or communications, than as a large, rounded foreign force.
7. It is not estimated that the Chinese Communists will attack Hong Kong or Taiwan in the near future, nor that they will greatly increase their personnel aid to the Viet Minh in the same period.
8. It is estimated that the USSR is not ready to start a general war at this time; this premise is basic to other assumptions.

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ATTACHMENT II

ESTIMATE OF FAR EAST SITUATION BY OSO FIELD MISSION

The following are comments on enemy capabilities and intentions expanded to cover the period from mid-May 1951 beyond the next two months. It is felt that it is more worthwhile and realistic to estimate the enemy over a longer period as he does the same for the U. S.

A. A heavy ground offensive will come sooner than expected. Although no manifestation of enemy air support to ground troops is immediately apparent, we feel this is dependent upon the results of their initial offensive.

B. It is not felt that the flight radius of enemy planes is a deterrent, rather he does not wish either planes or pilots to fall into our hands. In fact, the distance from Kyushu fighter air bases to the battlefield is even greater than the distance from Manchurian air bases. The reason for the dearth of enemy air action is found in his intentions, rather than his capabilities. There are five reasons why the Soviets are not furnishing and/or encouraging more air support. In ascending order of importance and strength, they have the following intentions:

1. Not to let the UN obtain aircraft and pilots.
2. To give Oriental pilots tactical experience which can be gained in defensive situation at Yalu River.
3. To test aircraft, equipment and tactics, as in the Spanish Civil War.
4. To conserve air force for possible warfare farther west.
5. To enhance Soviet control over China. By using the best troops of the old-time Chinese Communist generals in "human sea" tactics where casualties are enormous, the Soviets can break the power of the nationalistic military elements. This process is aided by the lack of air support while the Soviets tell the Chinese people they are protecting China Proper from UN imperialism by defensive action at the border and at the same time play up ground force "successes" in propaganda and build up the Soviet military strength in Manchuria for reasons of defense needs. Simultaneously, MAO will disappear and a pro-Soviet clique will emerge in Peking. Finally, there is still a potential army of approximately fifteen million men who can be thoroughly Sovietized without interference from old-time Chinese Communist nationalistic generals. At the same time UN strength will be drained off by attritional war.

C. The reason the Soviets are not using submarines is because the U. S. Navy is not the major factor to success or failure of the UN forces in

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Korea. Further, intensive use of submarines in the Japan Sea and the Yellow Sea is not too practical because of the shallowness and the ease with which subs could be tracked down once the Soviets had manifested use of them by sinking one or two vessels. If for some reason submarines are used, the fact that we would consider them Soviet is not relevant since Chinese Communists planes are known to be Soviet, yet the UN has not made an issue of this fact.

D. Definite destruction of the enemy air force means the enemy cannot effectively put his planes into the air. Therefore, to be able to carry out the first part of paragraph 3 of referenced cable, we must neutralize enemy air bases not only in Manchuria but also in Shantung Peninsula, which at the present time are just as close to the Korean battlefield. Complete neutralization of enemy airfields, moreover, is impossible since any number of fields can be constructed all over Eastern China as proven by the Japanese and the Americans in the last war. The current Russian movement of troops into Manchuria and the reinforcement of the air force throughout China is indicative that they are prepared for U. S. extension of the war into China. Although Soviet troops would be used to repel the U. S. Air Force and land army, it would not necessarily mean that the USSR would declare war, but would use its troops ostensibly in the defense of China as per their treaty. This would forestall the immediate bombing of the USSR Proper by the U. S. unless the U. S. desires the propaganda disadvantage of attacking the USSR. USSR aid to the Chinese Communists of arms (now in North Korea) and men (in China Proper) would not mean that the USSR must declare open war against the U. S.

E. 1. The Chinese Communists will definitely exert greater pressure in the Korean campaign and capitalize on the sense of frustration of UN counter measures and policy.

2. The above will occur only on the condition that the Soviets supply military support of a large extent, including ground, air and navy forces in Manchuria. The Chinese Communists are worried about the heavy concentration of Chinese Communist troops in the Northeast, where they are accessible to UN bombing and may suffer large losses. These troops form the backbone of the Chinese Communists' best forces. The belief here is that the Soviets have agreed to "guard" Manchuria.

3. Air activities in support of the Chinese Communists in Korea will mount progressively.

4. The bombing of Manchuria by the UN will not precipitate World War III but will meet with considerable air opposition and anti-aircraft action. The atomic bombing of Manchuria, particularly Soviet concentrations, will precipitate World War III. The use of atomic weapons, tactically in Korea, will not underline nor precipitate World War III.

F. The Soviets will use satellite forces as a Communist version of the international "peace" force when it is necessary to finish the war

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in Korea. It is felt that these troops will be committed only if the Chinese Communists cannot accomplish the mission of defeating the UN. However, Soviet troops and air force would be used in Manchuria Proper since the current concentration of Soviet forces is increasing and it is not likely that they would be removed to the USSR in case of a U. S. attack as one of their basic missions is extending control over the Chinese Communists. At present the Soviets desire to keep the UN forces pinned down in Korea, since this attrition of UN forces is of great political and strategic value to the USSR. The Soviets will not jeopardize the investment of equipment and political gains in Korea by placing a limitation on the composition or the extent of participation of Communist "UN" forces in Korea if these forces are required to accomplish the mission.

25X6A G. Action against Taiwan, Hong Kong, and further aid to the Viet Minh will take place according to the plan agreed to by the Soviets and the Chinese Communists and will be dependent upon the quantity of aid the Soviets can divert.

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25X6A [REDACTED] It is felt that personnel and material aid to the Viet Minh will continue in varying degrees since the Soviets can then maintain the initiative in FIC at a small expense. The Chinese Communists will concentrate on Southeast Asia after the settlement of the Korean War, first FIC, then peripheral areas, with active military support of the Viet Minh, propaganda subversion in Thailand, Burma and Malaya. It is agreed that the attack on Hong Kong and Taiwan will not occur in the immediate future.

25X6A [REDACTED]

2. The Chinese Communists will concentrate on obtaining supplies through S.E.A., mainly Burma (water and land route to west China) and India. They will shift their purchasing activities to those areas, and exports from China will also exit through those areas. Thailand, Burma and India will come to a tacit agreement with the Chinese Communists for the above purpose, being softened by threat of force and propaganda.

H. Since the U. S. is now merely reacting to Soviet moves, the Soviets, maintain the initiative and therefore are keeping war (all-out or not) to their level of productivity and ability of winning. It is not logical to state that the USSR is not ready to start a general war now. They have started and will continue to start small wars which will enable them to gain tactical objectives as part of an overall strategy. This overall strategy is one of not necessarily preparing for or fighting an all-out war, but a strategy of piecemeal defeat and/or neutralization of

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the Western World, making it impotent to the point where a so-called "all-out war" is not necessary. The Soviets have too much to lose from an all-out war, and the feeling is that they will more scrupulously avoid it than the U. S. The course of action will probably be similar to Korea, i.e., arm Eastern Germany against Western Germany; prepare other satellites against Yugoslavia; but stay out of these wars themselves. Although the U. S. might aid these countries, the U. S. is not armed or prepared to strike a counter-blow at the USSR Proper and will be forced (as in Korea) to aid only the nations attacked. In this way the USSR can continue attrition against the U. S. without the necessity of "all-out war".

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